

**QUALITY GRID**  
**Thematic Evaluation of European Commission Support to**  
**Justice and Security System Reform**  
**Final Report, November 2011**

<b>Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>1. Meeting needs:</b> Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?				<b>x</b>	
<b>2. Relevant scope:</b> Is the rationale of the policy and its set of outputs, results and outcomes/impacts examined fully, including both intended and unexpected policy interactions and consequences?				<b>x</b>	
<b>3. Defensible design:</b> Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with methodological limitations, is made accessible for answering the main evaluation questions?				<b>x</b>	
<b>4. Reliable data:</b> Are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?				<b>x</b>	
<b>5. Sound analysis:</b> Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?				<b>x</b>	
<b>6. Credible findings:</b> Do findings follow logically from, and are they justified by, the data analysis and interpretations based on carefully described assumptions and rationale?				<b>x</b>	
<b>7. Validity of the conclusions:</b> Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible findings?				<b>x</b>	
<b>8. Usefulness of the recommendations:</b> Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?				<b>x</b>	
<b>9. Clearly reported:</b> Does the report clearly describe the policy being evaluated, including its context and purpose, together with the procedures and findings of the evaluation, so that information provided can easily be understood?					<b>x</b>
<b>Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered</b>				<b>x</b>	

## Observations and Judgement

**Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered: VERY GOOD**

### **1. Meeting needs: Very Good**

The evaluation addresses the information needs of the commissioning body as envisaged in the Terms of Reference and it includes a clear overview of how the stated objectives have been achieved as well as it clarifies the intervention logic. The evaluation addresses both the strategic and operational levels and the analysis provided allows for methodological developments in the field concerned.

### **2. Relevant scope: Very Good**

The report addresses the entire scope as defined in the Terms of Reference with all its dimensions: temporal, geographic and regulatory. The main intended and unintended effects have been identified. Moreover, the evaluation took an interest in the interference with other non-EU donors, international and regional organisations, with the other EU policies and with partner governments' policies.

### **3. Defensible design: Very Good**

The evaluation method is clearly explained both in the main report and in the annexes and has been applied throughout the process. Given the complexity of the subject to be evaluated a combination of data collection tools and techniques was chosen in order to gather sufficient data to validate all identified indicators. The limitations inherent to the evaluation method have been clearly specified and the choices made have been explained.

### **4. Reliable data: Very Good**

Both quantitative and qualitative sources have been identified and data have been cross-checked and verified through different primary (interviews) and secondary (monitoring, evaluation reports) information sources and with the use of various data collection tools that are independent of one another (surveys, case studies, interviews, document analysis). The data collection tools have been succinctly presented in the main report and detailed in the Annexes. The documents used are clearly listed and include trustworthy sources. The limitations pertaining to the reliability of data or data collection tools are explicitly described (for example see Annexe 9 regarding the inventory of JSSR interventions).

### **5. Sound analysis: Very Good**

The analysis approach is made explicit and the validity limitations and challenges are identified and explained. The quantitative and qualitative analysis is rigorously done through precise and relevant logical steps thus being of great support to clarify and further the understanding of the evaluation and of its findings. The cause-and-effect links between the intervention and its

consequences are explained and comparisons are also made explicit (between interventions in different countries, between different programming periods, before and after the Lisbon institutional settlement).

## **6. Credible findings: Very Good**

The findings logically result from data analysis and interpretation. They are very clear, reliable and balanced. The combination of evidence provided by the different data collection tools is well managed. When interpretations are made this is made explicit and extrapolations are very rare or made explicit.

## **7. Validity of the conclusions: Very good**

Conclusions derive from findings which are linked with the facts and data presented in the evaluation. Their organisation in clusters makes them clear and even more straightforward. The limitations of conclusions' validity are made explicit, recalling in particular the institutional changes set in motion by the Lisbon Treaty and the Commission's growing experience in the field of JSS.

## **8. Usefulness of the recommendations: Very Good**

Recommendations are clearly linked to conclusions on the basis of the findings and are presented in a very clear and structured way in 4 separate clusters. They are operational for EU services (EU Commission, EEAS, EUD) as they provide practical options on how to address the challenges and limitations highlighted by the evaluation.

## **9. Clearly reported: Excellent**

The report is clear and its structure is logical. It provides comprehensive information on the scope of the evaluation, the design and methodology and its results. Considering the complexity of the theme and the wealth of information used, the report is relatively accessible and easy to read. The executive summary is well structured, clear and it presents the main conclusions and recommendations in a balanced and unbiased way. Annexes are very extensive and they provide a very solid backup to the report, while the latter remaining self-standing. Within the report there are complete and accurate references to the Annexes.